

The Wisdom and Mercy of God in pro-
longing the Church's Conflicts, and
gradually subduing her Enemies.

A

DISCOURSE

Preach'd on the Day of

Publick Thanksgiving,

November 22d, 1709.

And since Enlarg'd

By THOMAS RETNOLDS.



L O N D O N :

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To my Loving
People, and Auditors,
On the Day of
PUBLICK THANKSGIVING.

Dear Friends,

THE serious and close Attention
you gave in Hearing what
was delivered from the following Text,
has made me hope; that what I here
present unto your View, may not be
unacceptable. You will find I have made
large Additions, but have not altered
the Method and Thread of Discourse.
If it may serve to recommend and en-
dear to you the wise and merciful
Providence of God that still continues
to watch over us, I have my End. For
this I beg your Prayers, who am

Your devoted Servant,

In the LORD,

THOMAS REYNOLDS.

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Exod. XXIII. ver. 29, 30.

I will not drive them out from before thee in one Year; lest the Land become desolate, and the Beast of the Field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased and inherit the Land.

WE are come to make our most thankful Acknowledgements for the prosperous and great Successes it hath pleased GOD to grant the Arms of Her MAJESTY with those of Her ALLIES in this just War, in which we have been so long engag'd against a potent and cruel Enemy; and in which we have expended Rivers of Blood and Mines of Treasure.

For this End, I shall discourse upon these Words, which how little soever they seem to serve the Design of a *Thanksgiving*, will I hope be found pertinent thereto.

A

THEY

THEY express the Method God saw fit to take in his Providence to subdue his People *Israel's* Enemies, and to bring them into the *promised Land*: And then the Reasons of his Proceeding.

First, THE Method he saw fit to take in subduing their Enemies. This was by gradual Steps and a considerable Length of Time. *I will not drive them out from before thee in one Year — By little and little I will drive them out from before thee.*

Secondly, THE Reasons of this Proceeding. These do respect the present Condition and Circumstances of this People.

1. ONE Reason is the Inconvenience and Prejudice which might ensue upon a speedy and entire Possession. *Lest the Land become desolate, and the Beast of the Field multiply against thee.* Had God forc'd out the Enemy at once, his People not being at present sufficient in Number to occupy and manage

manage the whole Land, a great Part would lie uninhabited, and so grow waste and desolate. It wou'd in a short Time become a Wilderiness, fit only to breed and harbour the wild Beasts, which multiplying in abundance, they might, after a while, be in as much Danger from them, as from the *Canaanites*, or at least be expos'd to very great Inconveniencies. To prevent this, he wou'd not drive them out in one Year, but by little and little.

2. ANOTHER Reason: That they might be in a Capacity securely to enjoy the full Benefit of what he had design'd them. That being *increas'd, they might inherit the Land*. He would bring them in by Degrees, in Proportion as they multiply'd; and as their Occasions might require. The *Canaanites* were still to possess some Parts of it, but only to preserve them manur'd and free from the Beasts of the Field, 'till such Time as *ISRAEL* should become numerous enough to replenish them, and be in a Condition to enjoy with

Security, the plentiful Productions of this fruitful Country. Thus the Lord consulted at once their Prosperity and their Peace, and in blessing them was resolv'd to do it in a Method that at long run, shou'd prove upon all Accounts, the most advantageous and beneficial. For these Reasons the Enemy was not presently driven out, but they had Conflicts with them for many Years, 'till at length *the Lord gave them Rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their Fathers.*

THE Words thus explain'd, do afford us the following Observations.

I. *THERE are very sufficient and wise Reasons, why God does not make a speedy Dispatch of his Church's Enemies, but subdues them gradually, by little and little.*

II. *THAT in this gradual Method, he does but consult his People's greater Peace and more flourishing Prosperity, at long run.*

I. *THERE*

I. *THERE* are very sufficient and wise Reasons, why God does not make a speedy Dispatch, of his Church's Enemies but subdues them gradually, by little and little. This I shall speak to negatively and positively.

1. *Negatively.* The Reason is not from any Deficiency of Wisdom or Power. This indeed is the Case with Creatures. They cannot accomplish what they intend speedily and out of Hand. They must have Time to bring their Designs to pass. They must lay a Train of Thoughts, and proceed gradually from one Step to another, because they can't do otherwise, thro' Want of Skill and Defect of Power. But God who hath infinite Wisdom to contrive, almighty Power to effect, who hath all Things absolutely and entirely depending upon himself, can do whatsoever and as he pleaseth. He that made the whole World and all Things in it, by the word of his Power, saying, *let it be so, and it was so*, can with the same Dispatch and

Ease undo or destroy. We have many Instances of the sudden Destruction he hath brought upon the Church's Enemies. The *Egyptians* when pursuing the distressed and flying *Israelites* with eager Rage and a vehement Thirst for their Ruin, were themselves overwhelm'd with a sudden and total Destruction. God told his People but just before: *The Egyptians whom ye have seen to Day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Midianites who were as the Sand by the Sea Side for Multitude, were overcome in one Night, by the blowing only of Trumpets and the breaking of Pitchers. The sudden Surprise run them into Confusion, and immediately, the Lord set every Mans Sword against his Fellow. And it is said they were subdued before the Children of Israel, so that they lifted up their Heads no more. When that mighty Host came against Jehoshaphat, God undertook the Battle and gave them such an Overthrow, that Judah going forth the next Day to reconnoistre the Enemy,*

Exod. 14.
v. 13.

Judges 8.
v. 28.

2 Chron.
20.

2 Chron.
Chap. 20
v. 24.

be-

behold they were all found dead upon the Spot, and none escaped. And thus it will be, in the last great deciding Battle with Gog and Magog, who shall Rev. 20. v. 8, 9. *be destroyed with Fire which shall come from God out of Heaven and devour them. It were a most easie Thing with him to destroy his Enemies altogether and at once; but then this would not be so much for the Benefit of his Church, therefore he takes Time for it, and does it gradually, by little and little. But,*

2. I shall assign some positive Reasons why usually God sees Fit to proceed in this Method. And

(1.) He does it for *the Instruction of his People*. That there may be Time and Opportunity to teach them some very useful and important Truths, which it is fit they should be trained up in the experimental Knowledge of.

It is to inform us that (unless upon extraordinary Occassions) we are not to expect he should step out of the

common Way of his Providence, but let Things run in their natural Course, according to the Disposition and Working of second Causes, which we know is gradual and by little and little.

TO convince us of his Dominion and Sovereignty, when we see that tho' the most apt and likely Means be us'd, yet they can do no more than God will have them. Affairs are sometimes exceedingly perplex'd and intricate; the Wind blows hard in our Faces, our Enterprises fail us, and there is no getting forwards: at other Times every Thing succeeds beyond all Imagination and Thought. Hereby we learn that Things are not to move according to our Will, but as the sovereign Disposer of all Events is pleas'd to direct.

AGAIN, it is to guide us in our Estimates of Instruments, who are of vast Consideration, when God is pleas'd to make use of them, and but of little when he lays them by. It is a
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profound Reverence and Esteem we owe to them, as in the Hand of God, and to deny them Honour, would be a Contempt of him that uses them, but then on the other Hand we must not raise them above what they are, or make a God of 'em.

IN a Word, it is to teach us, that our whole and constant Dependance must be upon him; since we can do nothing without his Blessing, and it is he who must drive out our Enemies from before us. *Moses* and *Joshua* cannot do it alone tho' they were brave and gallant Men. Therefore to encourage *Joshua* the Lord said unto him, *Josh. 1. I will be with thee, as I was with Moses, v. 5. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.* So in the Verse before the Text; *I will send my Fear before thee, and will destroy all the People to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine Enemies to turn their Backs unto thee.* And in the Text, *I will drive them out from before thee, tho' not in one Year, but by little and little.*

(2.) HE uses this Method to *exercise his Peoples Grace's*. Did he give them the Necks of their Enemies, or compleat their Deliverance at once, it would leave no Room for this; and of Consequence God would lose the greatest Branch of his *Revenue* in this World, as his People their most precious and considerable Benefits. Therefore he prolongs his Church's Conflicts for the Exercise and Improvement of her Graces. And particularly,

THE Grace of Faith. Israel had long Wars with the Inhabitants of the Land. They had vast Difficulties to surmount. There were many Kingdoms confederated against them; *whose Cities were walled and very great; the People sagacious and politick; (see an Instance in the Gibeonites); exceeding numerous: and moreover the Children of Anak were there; i. e. Giants, Men of a prodigious Stature.* What could relieve them under such Dif-

Josh. 9.

Num. 13.
28.

Discouragements, but a lively Faith in the Promise and Power of God? How unequal a Match were they in themselves for such mighty Foes! The War must be wag'd in Faith; for they could do nothing in their own Strength. Therefore is it said that *by Faith the Walls of Jericho fell down, and thro'* Heb. 11. 30-33. *Faith they subdued Kingdoms.* And thus in that long Conflict which the Church of God has had with the Antichristian Powers, what frequent Occasion and Need has there been of the Exercise of Faith? and still must be 'till these Enemies be pull'd down. How could she struggle with such grievous Temptations, Sufferings, Persecutions, &c. to which she has been all along expos'd, were it not for the Exercise of Faith? *This is the Victory* her Converts *have over the World, even their Faith.*

THE *Grace of Patience* is by this Means also kept in Exercise. We have a sure Promise that *Babylon* shall fall, and that the Interest of God, how weak and low soever it may be

at

at Times, shall finally prevail and triumph over all its proud Opposers: But we must wait for the Accomplishment. It was by Degrees that Anti-christ ascended to the Height of his Power and Tyranny; In the like Method must ~~he~~ be brought down from it, by little and little, thro' the Revolution of many Ages. 'its Time must bring it to pass; and therefore, *Here is the Patience and the Faith of the Saints*; what will both require and exercise 'em.

AND then hereby *the Grace of Prayer* is drawn forth. It is adorable Condescension, that God should in a great Measure subject the Revolutions of Time to the Prayers of his People. These set all the Wheels of Providence a going. The Prayers of the Saints were first offered upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne, and then there were Voices, and Thundrings, and Lightnings, and an Earthquake. Before, there was a great Silence in Heaven, and every thing seem'd to be at a Stand; But no sooner did these ascend

Rev. 8. 3,
5.

Ver. 1.

ascend, than they were all present-ly in Motion. The great Changes that are brought to pass in the World, and especially the Deliverances of the Church, and ~~the~~^{her} Success against Enemies, are more owing to the Power of Prayer than the Strength of Armies. What will these do, were it not for a praying Remnant that 'tis hop'd God has yet in his Church! Whilst Israel was contending with Amalek, Moses went up to the Top of the Hill to observe and to pray.

And it came to pass when Moses held up his Hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his Hand, Amalek prevailed. Our Mercies are fetch'd down by Prayer: The Prosperity and Success of the Church depends upon it. Oh what a blessed Token would it be of some good thing at hand, were this more generally esteem'd and more zealously practic'd! The Spirit of Prayer would be to us even as the Spirit of Prophecy. For *He hath not said to the Seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain.* Thus God exercises the Graces of his People, their Faith, their Patience, and their Prayers. (3.)

Exod. 7.
v. 1.

Isa. 45. 17.

Deut. 8.
2.

(3.) He takes this Method *to prove them*. When he led about the Children of *Israel* for Forty Years in the Wilderness, he did it *to humble them, to prove them, and to know what was in their Heart*. God in trying us, makes great Discoveries of our Deceit and Corruptions. Have we now and then a Run of Success, how vaunting and proud, how confident and presumptuous, how wanton and secure do we grow, all on a sudden! We are so extremely elevated that our Heads run round, and we grow perfectly wild and extravagant, but which is worst of all, we return to our Follies. Our Seriousness abates, our religious Performances are slackned, and God the Donor of our Mercies is forgotten by us. When he had done some notable Exploit for *Israel*, 'tis said they sang his Praise (being mov'd for the present with the Brightness and Novelty of the Appearance, but as that abated) *they soon forgot his Works*. The Scripture records this in so close a Connexion with the former, as tho' they

they sang and sin'd together. To check our Folly, there are frequent Pauses in the Providence of God, and he gives Success but by little and little.

BUT then on the other Hand, are we follow'd with Disappointments and Rebukes? what murmuring and repining, what Unbelief and Despondence, what Discontent and Impatience may be observ'd to break forth! Then we groan under our Burdens, cry out of our Miseries, exclaim against Instruments, and it is well if God himself escape our Invectives. The unbelieving and ungrateful *Israelites*, when Things went cross to 'em were not only *almost ready to stone Moses*, but Exod. 17. flew directly in the Face of God. *Would* v. 4. God we had died in the Land of Egypt! Numb. 14. v. 2, and wherefore hath the Lord brought us 3, 4. unto this Land? and said one to another let us make a Captain, and let us return into Egypt.

THUS let God deal with us how he pleases, still we are sinning. In
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Prosperity we are wild and wanton, in Adversity we are sullen and spiteful. When he is humbling us, for our Pride and Vanity, we grow Mad with Vexation, and while he sees fit to correct us for one Set of Sins, we run into the contrary, that are as bad. How does this betray the Capriciousness and Corruption of our Nature! Oh the astonishing Deceit, the desperate Wickedness ~~that is in~~ our Hearts! tho' this blessed be God, is not the constant and general Case; for while these Discoveries are made, he is doing Good to the serious and better Part of his People. What is only *laid open* in others, is *mortified* in them, thro' the effectual Working of his holy Spirit, as they are truly humbled by Afflictions and engaged by their Mercies.

(4.) GOD doth this not only for the proving of his People, but for *the fuller Vindication of his Justice upon their Enemies*. By taking such a Course as this with them, they have the Benefit of loud and frequent

quent Warnings, sufficient to awaken 'em, if they would but attend. They have many Opportunities to observe, how the Hand of God is lifted up against 'em; and which is the greatest Mercy of all, they have Space allow'd 'em for Repentance. He does not on a sudden proceed to their Destruction, but gives 'em Time to save themselves, would they hearken to his Voice. Yet if the merciful Delay of his Providence, does but harden them the more, (as it usually happens) it then only serves to aggravate their Guilt, and ripen 'em at Length for the ~~Infliction~~ of some more tremendous and exemplary Vengeance. For hereby their Sins become exceeding great and provoking, they are left without Excuse, and the Justice of God, will not only be vindicated, but eminently glorified in the *greatest Severities* upon 'em. *Pharaoh* and his People had very loud and repeated Warnings, sufficient Intimations to have mov'd the Hearts of any, but such blind Rebels: but when they were resolved to sin, in the Face and

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Rev. 2.
20.

in Despite of *Miracles*, a sudden and utter Ruin was the fittest Punishment for 'em. What a glorious Vindication is it, of the Wrath of God, upon mystical *Jezabel*, that he gave her Space to repent of her Fornication and she repented not. I shall only add,

(5.) And lastly. Hereby we see more of the shining Beauty of Providence. We have a more particular Insight into the various Ways and stupenduous Methods, God takes to humble the insolent and haughty Opposers of his Cause and Interest. Had he made a short Work with the *Canaanites*, his People had not beheld so much of his Glory, neither had they ~~had~~ found such Experience of the Wisdom and Power, of the Goodness and Faithfulness of God, as length of Time and a gradual Progress did furnish them with. Had the Enemy been driven out at once, instead of *many*, they would have had but one *Ebenezer* or Stone of Remembrance to erect, as a Monument to his Praise. But as the Matter was manag'd, every Year unfolded to 'em a fresh Scene

HOW entertaining, and useful is it to read the History and *ANNALS* of the *Jews*! To observe the various Steps, the no less gracious than wonderful Methods the Lord took to vanquish their deadly Foes, and to put 'em in Possession of the Land! How in all, he made good his Promises to a Tittle! Infomuch as *there failed not ought of any good Thing which the Lord had spoken unto the House of Israel: All came to pass.* How much had it taken from the *Beauty and Elegance* of Providence, if all this had been crowded up in *one Instance* only,

Joſh. 21.
v. 45.

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tho' that a very memorable one! This wou'd have given us but too short and compendious an Account. It had been like a fine Piece of Workmanship, that was so closely rolled together, that scarce any Thing of it could be seen; and what of it might, was but very dimly and imperfectly. But as the sacred Volumes represent it, how does it appear, like a curious Piece of Embroidery or Needlework clearly unfolded and laid open to View: And in which, there is such an infinite Variety of Art, and every Piece so exquisitely fine; that the more closely you examine it, the more you are struck with Wonder: and beholding it altogether, it is so beautiful and so glorious, that you are never satisfied with looking upon it, nor weary of applauding and admiring it.

AND to speak to what does more immediately concern *our selves*; should it not very much affect us, to observe that Train of surprising Providences which hath attended us, ever since God hath brought us out
of

of the more than *Egyptian Darkneſs* and *Bondage of POPERŸ*, by the glorious Light of the *REFORMATION*? Were I to enter into the Detail of them, how would they in Number exceed even the Records which we have of the antient *Jews*? Nay, were I only to confine my ſelf to thoſe that commenc'd with the late *happy REVOLUTION*, how numerous would *theſe* be! During this lingering War, to which our reſtleſs Adverſaries have compell'd us, what memorable Inſtances have there been of God's gracious Appearances for us! 'Tis true, our Enemies have been driven out from before us, but *by little and little*; yet if we were to add up every particular Account and then the total Sum, we ſhall find a very large Produce: The Time would fail us to recount every particular Advantage, and to ſet it forth with all its embellishing Circumſtances. I ſhall only juſt mention a few.

THERE is the glorious Victory at *Hochſtet* or *Blenheim*, and the no leſs glorious Conſequences of it; The

Josh. 10.
13.

shameful Retreat of the Enemy from *Barcelona*: The fatal Overthrow that was given them at *Turin*: The famous Battle of *Ramellies*, and the vast Successes which follow'd upon that: And to come nearer, there is the advantageous *prevention* of the Invasion: The Battle of *Oudenarde*: The reducing of *Lisle*: The almost incredible Success of the Fight at *Wynnendale*: The surmounting of amazing Difficulties, the lengthening of the fair Season, making it as the Day of *Joshua*, 'till like him we had *avenged us of our Enemies*, and compleated all that we desir'd. And to conclude with what hath been the *happy Occasion* of this joyful Day, there is the taking of *Tournay*, (that Master-piece of modern Fortification.) The last famous Victory at *Blaregnies* (which was the more glorious by how much it was obtain'd maugre the stoutest Resistance and most unexpressible Difficulties) And then the finishing Stroke in taking that important Fortress of *Mons*, which confirm'd our Successes, and outdid the Expectations of our Enemies. These are but some of God's
Ways

Ways and mentioned in the Cross. And did we duly consider them, how would they excite our Wonder, and oblige us to confess that he has acted towards us, as tho' he had sat *in Consult* to give us Entertainment? What a Lustre, what a Glory should we find upon the Ways of God, in the Means, the Methods, the gradual Steps and the Time he hath taken to humble our Enemies! doing it *not in one Year*, but *by little and little*.

AND does not this conduce incomparably more to the *Honour* of God, and the *Benefit* of his People, than it would have done had he brought them down at once, and contracted this curious Frame of Providence, within the narrow Limits but of *one Year*? Do we not hereby receive much more ample Instruction? are not our Graces more duly exercis'd? and our Hearts more excited and tun'd to the delightful Work of Praise? Such a Multiplicity, such a Variety of merciful Dispensations should (methinks) very much affect

and quicken us, and make our Hearts
 Pſal. 92. like *David's Instrument of ten Strings*,
 3. which he us'd upon ſolemn Occaſions,
 and which of all his *Muſick* 'tis proba-
 ble, was the moſt ſweet and melodi-
 ous. Upon ſuch a Review, ſhall we
 Pſal. 57. not ſay with him? *Awake up my Glo-*
 ver. 8, 9, *ry, I my ſelf will awake early. I will*
 10. *praiſe thee O Lord among the People: I*
will ſing unto thee among the Nations.
For thy Mercy is great unto the Heavens,
 Pſal. 26. *and thy Truth unto the Clouds. I will*
 7. *publiſh with the Voice of Thankſgiving,*
and tell of all thy wondrous Works.
 We ſhall be the more diſpos'd to this
 by conſidering what I am now

II. In the Second Place to obſerve,
viz. That in the gradual Method which
God takes to ſubdue his People's Enc-
mies, he conſults their greater Peace,
and more flourishing Proſperity at long
Run.

I. HE conſults their *greater Peace*.
 This it is evident he did with Reſpect
 to thoſe in the Text. It had not been
 ſo ſafe for them had he rooted out the

Canaanites at once. This indeed might have secur'd them from the Danger of *foreign Enemies*, for who would have striven with a People that had God thus fighting for 'em? But then it would have given an Opportunity to *intestine Foes*, (no less dangerous than those that were destroy'd) even the *wild Beasts*, to have risen up against them. Therefore it was not fit to expel the Inhabitants, all at once. *I will not drive them out from before thee in one Year, least, &c. q. d.* Should I put a speedy Issue to the War, tho' this would procure thee Rest from those I should destroy, yet as great Inconveniences might arise from another Quarter. Should I rid the Land of its People, the Beasts of the Field, would then infest and plague thee; and 'twere better and far more honourable to wage War with *Men*, than with the *savage Beasts*. Thou shalt possess it with all the Expedition that is consistent with thy Safety. This can only be when thy Numbers are increas'd, which will require Time. God delay'd then his giving them the full Possession

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on of the Land, in Order to procure them thereby a more peaceable Settlement at last.

AND thus it is to be hop'd, that in much *Wisdom* and *Mercy* he has seen fit to permit the Lengthning of the *present* War, in Order at last, to procure for us, a more *firm and durable Peace*; as well as for other Beneficial Ends and Purposes. It was an unhappy *Necessity* that oblig'd our late GLORIOUS DELIVERER to conclude a Peace, which only gave the *faithless* and *crafty* Enemy an Opportunity shortly after to break it with unspeakable Advantage to himself: Whereas had the War continued, he had in all Probability, been soon brought to our own Terms. It must *now* be agreed on all Hands, we can not be safe 'till he be so far reduc'd, as not to have it in his *Power*, (seeing he never wants the *Inclination*) to molest and disturb us. God in his great Mercy seems to be taking a Course, that will in a very little Time effectually do it; if we are so wise as not, (thro' our own *Importunity* and *Haste*,) to run ourselves

selves into the like *Inconveniences* as before? and for which, we have been *smarting* ever since. He is apparently driving him out from before us. Every Campaign is now crown'd with **GLORIOUS VICTORY** and mighty Success. The Enemy is even at *our Discretion*; we *compel* him to fight and then we *beat* him; or we make him *tamely* stand by and see his strongest Towns delivered unto us. And the Hand of God against him, is yet more visible in that, whilst his *Lines* and *Intrenchments* are penetrated, his *Armies* put to Flight, his *Towns* reduc'd, his *strongest Defences* broken down: His *Trade* also at the same Time is almost ruin'd: His *Treasures* are exhausted: And to *finish* the Misery, his *Subjects* are perishing and ready to devour one another, thro' Want of *Bread*. Thus he is like some *huge* and *wild MONSTER*, whose Feet and Horns are not only cutting off, but that is affected also with a Distemper, at the *Heart*. Have a little Patience, for under *such Circumstances* he cannot long continue. Should God
prof-

prosper us, as he hath done, the Lengthning of the War, can only issue in further Judgments upon *our Enemies*; but may in the greatest Mercies to *our selves*. Every new Success will be a further Weakening of him, as on the other Hand it will strengthen the *Foundation* of (what we have been so long contending for) an *honourable* and a *lasting Peace*. He must come at Length to Terms, and be forc'd to the Necessity of keeping them too: And how much farther God in his Providence, (beyond our Expectation) may over-rule Matters for the Sake of his *afflicted Church*, that hath so long suffer'd by PERSECUTION (as not only his *own*, but *other Nations* have done by his TYRANNY) is not for me to determine. I will only say, it is our Duty *most fervently* to pray for it, and if by the *Method* God is using, the *Protestant Powers* (those *brave Asserters* of LIBERTY) shall be in a Condition at Last, so far also to plead the Cause of RELIGION as to obtain Relief to our *dear Brethren*; by tying up this *WILD BEAST*
of

of the Field and Boar of the Wood: Pſal. 80.
 What Cause ſhall we have, of un-^{13.}
 ſpeakable Joy and Thankfullneſs!
 Tho' we have been apt to complain
 of the Tediouſneſs of the War, yet
 then we ſhall bleſs God, who in
 his adorable Wiſdom hath over-rul'd
this Circumſtance of the Judgment to ſo
 great and ſo much deſired an Iſſue.
 But,

2. HEREIN doth he alſo conſult
the greater Proſperity of his People.
Until thou be increaſed and inherit the
Land. i. e. untill thou be not only
 out of Danger from the *Beaſts of the*
Field, but in a Condition to enjoy
 the *copious Bleſſings* I deſign thee.
 Had they taken Poſſeſſion *in one Year*
 the Land had been too much for them :
 and then, their *Bleſſings* would have
 become their *Burden*. He led 'em in
 by Degrees, as they increas'd in Num-
 bers; 'till in Proceſs of Time, having
 filled the whole Land, he gave them
 all that their Hearts could wiſh for.

IT would exceed the Limits of this
 Diſcourſe, to dilate upon all the proſ-
 perous

1 King. 4.
20.
26.

perous Circumstances to which this People were at Length advanc'd. I shall only refer you, to that Instance of their Happiness, which the Reign of KING SOLOMON presents us with: For tho' in JOSHUA's Days, they were signally bless'd, yet in *Solomon's*, they appear'd in all their Glory. Then they had *Peace on all Sides round about them*. They dwelt safely every Man under his Vine, and under his Figtree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the Days of Solomon; eating and drinking and making merry. Their Country was as the Garden of Eden, and Paradise of God, stor'd with all the choice Fruits of Nature and the Benefits of Grace. They had every Thing that could contribute to the Happiness and the Glory of a People. Their Numbers were multiply'd as the Sand of the Sea, they were loaded with Plenty, filld with Riches beyond Expression, and govern'd by a PRINCE, who for the Stateliness of his Palaces, the Splendour of his Court, and his Wisdom for Government; was the Pattern of Ages, and the Wonder of the World.

World. But that which still exceeded all these: they had **THE PRESENCE OF GOD**, who made their *Temple his Habitation* and chose *Jerusalem* to put his Name there. **HAPPY** ^{2 Chron 7, 12. Kings 21. 7.} sure was that People who were in such a Case! yea happy was that People thus to have **GOD** for their **LORD**! To all this did God bring 'em at last, tho' it was *by little and little*, and thro' the Course of many Years.

AND now with Respect to *our selves*: It is not without Ground that we hope he may in the present Method of his Providence, be consulting for us, not only an honourable and safe Peace, but the *most flourishing Prosperity* upon all Accounts at last. For if the Happiness of a People must be conceiv'd (as above) to consist in their Numbers, and Strength, their Interest and Fame, their Plenty of Necessaries, their Riches and Traffick, the Wisdom and Honour of their Prince, the Goodness of their Constitution and Government, and above all; in the Presence and Blessing of God. What People is there

there upon Earth that bid so fair for all this as we do? do I say *bid for it*? I will say, who have so far acquir'd it. And it is easie to observe, that the Continuance of the War, has not contributed a little to it.

FOR as to our Numbers it has most evidently done so, in the great Multitudes of *Protestants* who have fled to us, from the *French Tyranny* and *Persecution*; and of late, the poor *Palatines*, whom her Majesty has receiv'd with great Compassion and Tenderness, as a *nursing Mother*: By which Means, not only this famous City, but the Kinghom of *Ireland* and and other Parts of her Dominions, have been much increas'd.

IT may seem a *Paradox* to say the War has done any Thing to ^{us} the strengthening of us: But this will not seem strange to such as shall consider how much it has increas'd our cheif Bulwark the *Navy*, rouz'd our *Martial Genius*, given us *Instruction* and *Experience in War*, furnish'd us with many
Brave-

brave Commanders and renowned Leaders, promoted the *UNION* and fill'd us *with People*, that have given manifold Proofs they are no *Burthen*, but a *great Addition* to the Riches and Strength of our Nation, if we will but employ 'em.

NEED I tell you also that the *Wisdom and Vertues* of her *MAJESTY*, ^{1 Kings 4.}
(whose *Fame* like *SOLOMON's* *is in all* ^{v. 3.}
Nations round about) the *Union* and *Zeal* of her *PARLIAMENTS*, with their *Dispatch* of the publick Affairs; the *Secrecy* and *Steadiness* of her Councils, the *Faithfulness* and *Ability* of her Ministers in foreign Courts, the *Gallantry* and *SUCCESS* of her Soldiers, with the *Courage* and *Conduct* of her Generals in the Field; and in a Word, the *Loyalty* and *Love* of her People at Home, in this tedious and expensive War, have acquir'd such a *Reputation* and *Glory* throughout the World, that none can equal us in *Fame*, or vye with us for *Interest*.

NOR can any be ignorant how
C much

much the War has contributed to the establishing and preserving *our happy Constitution and Government*. To defend *these*, we took up Arms, and so far hath God favour'd a *righteous Cause* that the Invaders of our LIBERTY and PROPERTY have not only been *driven out* of these Kingdoms, but during the War and by Means thereof, our *ancient Rights* have been restor'd; Her MAJESTY's *Person and the Succession of the Crown in the Protestant Line* secur'd, and the Hopes of the PRETENDER with all his *open and secret Abettors* have been extinguished. So that all that our Enemies have hitherto done to subvert our Government, or to weaken and divide us; has only serv'd the more firmly to unite and settle us.

NOW 'tis evident how much all these do conduce to our *Prosperity*. To which if we add the Consideration of the *many Blessings of NATURE* which God hath bestowed upon us in the Fruitfulness of our Country, and its commodious Scituation for
Trade,

Trade, but above all in THE TRUE *+ those of grace*
RELIGION, that chief of Blessings and the free Exercise of it secur'd unto us by *Acts of Parliament* and *Royal Assurances*; we must conclude, there can be nothing more desir'd, but *Peace with our Enemies*, and *heartly Love among our selves*, to make us the most flourishing, and the most happy People under so good a QUEEN, and so well constituted a Government.

Application.

FROM what has been said, I think I have given you sufficient Reasons why God does not speedily reduce our Enemies, but *drives them out from before us by little and little*. And I have shewn you how much this sets off his *Wisdom* and *Mercy*, in preparing Matters hereby for our greater Peace, and more flourishing Prosperity in the End.

I shall conclude my *Discourse* with the following *Reflections*.

1. Methods of *force* may in some cases be used with the Church's Enemies. They may be *driven out*, especially, in a War that is commenc'd only for the recovering of what is unjustly detain'd from us. This is a Truth that holds good against the Enemies with whom we are at present engag'd. *Conferences* and *Treaties* have been hitherto us'd by them as Artifices only to *amuse* us; by which they have convinc'd the World, that nothing but Necessity, or Force of Arms, can bring them to Reason. They will not resign, or comply with fair Methods, and therefore must be driven to it. This justifies the War, and makes the continuance of it necessary. What the Enemy has gain'd by Violence, Deceit, and the most horrible Methods of Injustice, he will not deliver up again but at the Price of Blood. He struggles hard, and what is gotten from him, is done by wresting it out of his Hands. Such is his Pride and Hardness, that he will not

not yield. The Distress of his Country, and the lamentable Cries of his People cannot yet move him. He is resolv'd to hold out as long as he can, and we gain ground upon him but by Inches. Thus we have not only an unjust, but a stubborn Adversary to deal with. However,

Secondly, Let us not faint or despond. It is Matter of Comfort, that we have seen him probably at the Height. He is going down. The Hand of God is evidently against him. He is driving him out from before us, tho' it be gradually and slowly. The more time he takes to do it in, the more admirable will the Performance be at last, and the greater the Benefits that we shall receive from it. How many rare and curious Pieces of Providence should we have miss'd, had God accomplish'd *that* for us in the first Year of the Revolution, which he has been doing ever since? His Glory is to be consulted as well as our Satisfaction; nor does he neglect even this, seeing he delays our Mercies, only to give us the more pleasing

Relish of them when they come: And certainly it is the greatest Blessing of all our Enjoyments, to be able to *know* their Worth, and *taste* their Sweetness.

Thirdly, Let us learn the *Instructions*, exercise the *Graces*, and eye the *Providences* that God would have us in these Delays. Let us not therefore expect Miracles, where he will bring about his Purposes by ordinary Means. Let us reverence his Dominion and Sovereignty: Honour the Instruments he uses, but not expect more from them than Men can do. Let us make God our Refuge at all times. When we enter the Field, let us take Care to engage his Presence with us, by having an intimate Dependance upon him, and forming the most encouraging Expectations from his Power and Goodness. In a Word, let us pray with Fervour and with Faith; let us hope against Discouragements, and wait with Patience. *For the Vision is yet for an appointed Time, but at the End it shall speak and not lye, tho' it may tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*
4thly,

4thly, L T E the *Wisdom* and *Mercy* of God, that appears in the slow and gradual Method which he takes in subduing our Enemies, *pacify our Minds* under the *Burdens* and *Sufferings*, we feel thro' the *Length* of the War. And *my Brethren*, we have all the Considerations to quiet us that can be.

WHATEVER our Miseries and Burdens are, they are no Way *comparable* to theirs who are at War with us. We with all our Sufferings, have *Success* and *Victory* on our Side; 'tis quite the *contrary* with them. Besides, the very *worst* of our Circumstances are better than the *best* of theirs. Our Scarcity compar'd with theirs, may (without a Figure) be called *Plenty*: Our Poverty, *Riches*: Our Decay in Trade, a *Fulness of Business*: Our Want of Commerce, an abounding in all Manner of Traffick and Merchandize. And in our worst Case, we do all enjoy those *Felicities*, which an *enslaved* People have not so much as the *Conception* of.

NEITHER are our Circumstances like theirs, whose Country is the *Seat of War*. We behold not the dismal Spectacles, the dreadful Wafts and Desolations it hath made; neither are we affrighted with its terrible Alarms. We hear of these things at a Distance only. We enjoy a *profound Tranquility* within our selves, while we are engaging our Enemies abroad.

NOR are we like those who at this Day are not only pinch'd with Scarcity, next to a Famine; but visited with a raging Pestilence; (the like to which no History does afford); besides the Danger to which they are expos'd, from potent and contending Neighbours.

OUR Case does not come near to that, of several of our *Confederates* and *Allies*; whose Countries have been invaded and made desolate, whose Towns have been taken and demolished, and whose People have been

been destroyed or dispers'd: of which the pleasant and fruitful *Palatinate* and other Parts are *mournful* Instances.

NAY, our present Condition, blessed be God! is far from what it was before, or has been since the War first began. We are not under a *Popish Prince* or influenc'd by a *French Government*. Our Laws are not subverted, our Rights and Priviledges are not invaded, nor is our Religion threatened; We have no Enemy entring our Land either on one Side or t'other, either in *North-Britain* or *Ireland*. *God hath driven them out from before us.*

THE Priviledges and Blessings we now enjoy, and which have been restor'd and preserv'd to us by the War; are what when under a *Popish* and Arbitrary Government, we would with *Thankfulness* have purchas'd at *any Expence*; even more, than we have been at in defending them.

The War is continu'd only in the Defence of these *unspeakable Blessings*,
that

that we may *Compel* the Enemy to Reason, and put it out of his Power to *invade* our Priviledges again, or to disturb us in the Enjoyment of 'em.

WE have suffer'd by Treaties : This ought to make us the more cautious for the future, that our Enemies may not gain that Advantage over us by a Peace, which they could not do by the War.

OUR Confederates, tho' much more press'd with the Burdens, and much more expos'd to the Miseries of it, are all convinc'd of the Necessity of continuing it.

ALL possible Means are us'd, and Methods taken to ^{oblige} ~~compel~~ the Enemy to Peace, and the War is prolong'd only to obtain it upon honourable Terms and *such Security* as shall free us from the Apprehensions of its speedily breaking out again.

THE QUEEN, her *Parliament*,
her *Ministers*, our *Generals* and *Soldiers*,
are

are every one contributing what he can to the Conclusion of the War : And every one seems now to strive who shall perform his Part best.

SUPPLIES are *readily* and *liberally* granted : Orders are *speedily issued forth* and *duly executed* : Our Armies are *forthwith* recruited : We *prevent* the Enemy in the Field. OUR CONSUMMATE GENERAL and THOSE with him, lose no Time, and let slip no Advantage ; we do not stay till one presents, but engage the Enemy at all Disadvantages and venture upon Enterprizes where the Difficulties seem *insuperable*.

AND while such Methods are taken ; we cannot form the *least Suspicion* of those who have *the Management* of publick Affairs, and in whose Power it is to give us Peace ; were they not sure, that a little Time will do it with *much more Advantage*, and to *general Satisfaction*.

OUR

OUR Soldiers are grown weary of the *Tediousness* and *infinite Fatigues* of the War. They long to go home, that they may reap the Fruits of the Peace they are purchasing at the Price of their Blood, and that they may wear their *Lawrels*, and tell of *all* their *Glory*.

OUR QUEEN can have no Interest *distinct* from ours. She has *no* *Consort*, *no* *Children* but her *dear People*. She is of the *same Religion*, and has a Heart *entirely English*. Her *Steddiness* to her *Principles* and *Faithfulness* to her Conscience brought her to the Throne; and here she has acted, as tho' it were her *stedfast Opinion* that the *only* Way to make her self *Great*, is by promoting the *Happiness* and *Glory* of her People. And how can she that has so often and so many Ways contributed to the Relief and Comfort of her Subjects, even to the lessening of her *own Revenue*, omit any thing that may be for their further Service or delay it one Day longer than is convenient?

BESIDES

BESIDES all this; God has followed her Endeavours with great and wonderful Success, so that the Completion of all our Wishes is even at the Door. We have been graciously told from the Throne, that we are setting the *last Hand* to it, and it is made a Question whether the Enemy will continue the Dispute.

UPON the whole then, with what Calmness and Ease may we expect the End of this long, expensive and bloody War, which seems to approach us? With what Chearfulness should we bear our present Burdens in Prospect of a Peace, which *with God's Blessing*, may in some Time recover our Losses, and put an End to all our Complaints? With what Freedom should we *pay our Taxes*, (tho' they did exceed those of former Years,) in Hopes that this may be the last? Especially too, since we have the Royal Assurance, that if there be Peace, what is given *shall be apply'd to the lessening of the publick Debts.* HAPPY Britain, if it KNEW
its

its own Happiness! To murmur and repine, to be uneasy and impatient under such *blessed Circumstances*, and in so near a *View* of what we desire, were the Way to offend God, and proclaim our selves *an unreasonable* and *an ungrateful People*. But I hasten to the Conclusion; and therefore,

5. LET what has been said, excite us to render all possible Praise and Thanks to our infinitely gracious God, for the Mercies I have mention'd: and particularly the *great Advantages* which we are assembled this Day on Purpose to commemorate.

THO' the Successes of this *last Campaign* have been as *glorious* for our Arms as any of the *preceeding*; yet, have they not come up *fully* to the Expectations of some People; who in the Beginning of it, look'd for nothing but either a *sudden Peace*, or that we should forthwith carry the War into the *Heart* of *FRANCE*: but we see we went faster in our *Minds*, than God wou'd have us in his *Providence*.

HOWEVER,

HOWEVER, what I have said should effectually cure *any Uneasiness* upon that Account, and *convince* us that this ought to be *no Hindrance* to our Thankfulness, but *promote it* rather; since if God designs us Peace as a *Blessing*, the Circumstance of the *Delay* is only ordered in Wisdom, to render it the *more advantageous* when it comes. Tho' the War be not finished, yet in all *Appearance* it is the next Door to it. And should we not bless God who has brought us *so near* the End of our Wishes? The *Mariners* who have had a tedious Voyage, and been sorely toss'd with *Tempests*; when they make an *Observation*, and find they are not far from Land, how do they rejoyce! and much more when they are sailing into Port. All their past Toils and Labours, their Dangers and Affrightments are then forgotten.

THE Successes of this Year call for abundant Thankfulness: Whether we consider the Advantages *themselves*; the stout Resistance and *unexpressible* Dif-

Difficulties, that were broken thro' to obtain 'em: The *vast* Impression they must have *really* made upon the Enemy, and the *happy* Consequences that are like to follow upon them.

BUT that which shou'd raise our Gratitude to the *highest* Pitch, should be the Sense of our *Unworthiness* of these Mercies, and that God shou'd grant 'em to us, altho' (*collectively* and *as a Nation*,) we did not so much as *seek* to him for the same. It is as if he were *resolv'd* to bless us, whether we desir'd him or not.

THE *less* he was engag'd to do all this for us, the *more* thankful should we be; and the *more* humble too; since we can assume *nothing* to our selves; but might rather with Reason have expected that he should have *punished* us for this our *unprecedented* Neglect. How pertinently may those Words be apply'd unto us? *Speak not in thine Heart after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee saying; For my own Righteousness the Lord*
bath

hath brought me in to possess the Land, but for the Wickedness of these Nations, the Lord doth drive them out before thee. Not for thy Righteousness, or the Uprightness of thine Heart, dost thou Deut. 9. v. 4, 5, 6. *go to possess the Land; but for the Wickedness of these Nations, the Lord doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the Word which the Lord sware unto thy Fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Understand therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good Land to possess it for thy Righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked People. It is inculcated no less than three Times to prevent their fond Conceits, to upraid 'em for their Sins, and to let them know that tho' they shar'd in the Mercy; they had no Share in the Glory of procuring it. It was freely given, but no Way deserv'd.*

6thly, Let us improve the Mercies we have commemorated, to the strengthening of our Faith and Hope with respect not only to the Enemies we are dealing with, but all others whatsoever. Not only with respect to the French

D

Adver.

Adversaries, but all their *Abettors*: not only those that are Enemies to Our *Government*, but to the *Church of God*: not only our *temporal*, but our *Spiritual* Enemies, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*. Let us cherish a lively Hope that *All these*, in the Use of God's instituted Means, and a humble Dependance upon him; shall *by little and little*, in his due Time (which is the best) be brought under.

AS to the *French*, blessed be God! they are driven out of our Land, and several other fine Countries, of which they were in Possession, and seem now to be declining apace. If there be any of their *Abettors* among us, it must be look'd upon as our Unhappiness; and doubtless they of all Men do most truly deserve the *opprobrious* Name of *false Brethren*.

THERE are others (not far a kin from these) Men of so *fiery* a Temper, and such *bloody* Principles, that on this Account, we are not so happy as the *Israelites*; who were not infested by
by

by *wild Beasts* in their Land: But 'tis our Comfort that *with us* they do not *increase* and *multiply*. They come too near the Description which we have in the Second Epistle of St. *Peter*, and which I am not willing here to insert; Men who *despise Government*. I am far from wishing what is there foretold of 'em. I pray God it may never come to pass. I mention it with a *pure* Design of *Charity*, that they may consider and avoid the Danger. And 'tis to be hop'd that thro' the *evident* Appearances of God for us, and the *Clemency* of her MAJESTY's Government, they will *at last* be subdu'd to a more *brotherly* Temper.

AND how much is it to be wish'd, that not only those who are Enemies to the Interest of our *Nation*, but of the *Church of God*, might *every where* be prevail'd with to lay down their Enmity; since the maintaining of it can only end in their own *Perdition*. For Antichrist must fall, and every new Conquest is a sure *Pledge* of it, and a *further Step* towards it.

D 2

THEN

THEN shall the Church have Rest
 Psa. 80. from her Enemies. There shall be no
 v. 13. *Boar out of the Wood, nor wild Beast*
 Jsa. 4. v. *of the Field to waste and devour her.*
 5. *For the Lord will create upon every dwelling Place of Mount Zion, and upon her Assemblies, a Cloud and Smoke by Day, and the shining of a flaming Fire by Night; and upon all the Glory shall be a Defence.*

AND tho' we may not live to see this blessed Day, yet we have matter of joy, whilst assured, that God will subdue the worst Enemies we have, if we go on to serve him, and these are the *Flesh* and the *Devil*. *The God of Israel* will drive them out; he will subdue *our Iniquities*, (tho' it be by *little and little*) and bruise Satan *under our Feet*. What if in this World we should hear of nothing but *Wars and Rumours of Wars*? yet we shall enjoy great Peace in our Soul from the Prospect of that inconceivable and endless Blessedness which he is preparing for us.

There

*There, the wicked cease from troubling,
and there the weary be at rest. To con-
clude all,*

*7thly, and lastly, That this may be our
happy Condition, let us endeavour to
make Returns suitable to our great Mer-
cies.*

LET us lead *quiet and peaceable
Lives*, be industrious Practicers and Pro-
moters of *all Godliness and Honesty*,
which will secure us the Favour of God,
the Continuance of all the *rich Bles-
sings* we enjoy, and the Vouchsafement
of those we hope for.

LET us continue our Prayers for a
Blessing upon the *QUEEN*, the *Par-
liament*, the *Army*, the *Navy*, the *Con-
federates*, and all *the glorious Instru-
ments* of our Happiness, which will re-
commend us more to the Esteem of
Her *MAJESTY* than if we should
continue to fatigue her with our need-
less Addresses.

LET

LET us not upon our great Successes grow wanton and secure, or be like those in the Text, *who forgot God*
 Psal. 106. *their SAVIOUR that had done great*
 v. 21. 22 *things in EGYPT; wondrous Works*
 Deut. 32. *in the Land of HAM, and terrible things*
 v. 6. *by the red Sea. Do ye thus requite the*
Lord, O foolish People and unwise!

LET us love the Lord our God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Strength. He hath done these great things for us, that he might melt down the Disaffection of our Hearts, and win us to the Love of himself.

LET us devote our selves entirely to him. I beseech you Brethren, by the Mercies of God that ye present your Bodies (i. e. by a known Figure, your whole selves) a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable Service.

Finally, LET us express our Gratitude for the Good he hath done us, by doing all the Good we can, unto all Men. The Divine Beneficence

cence should both teach us our Duty and powerfully prompt us to the Practice of it. As these should be Days of *universal Joy* and *mutual Festivity*; so of *sending Portions* and bestowing *Gifts to the Poor*. Our *Goodness extendeth* not 'unto Him. He wants nothing we can give; nor is benefited by any thing we can do. Only, we have the poor and our fellow Servants, the *Household of Faith* always with us: Many of whom he hath left in needy Circumstances on Purpose to prove our Love to himself, by our Kindness to them. If it be ask'd, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* Turn your Eye to his needy Saints. Behold your Jesus suffering in his distressed Brethren. There he will receive your Visits, and accept of your Benevolence: And what you do to them he will esteem as done unto himself. *I was an hungred and ye gave* Mat. 25.
me Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave v. 6.
me Drink: I was a Stranger and ye took me in: naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in Prison and ye came unto me — Inasmuch
as

as ye have done it unto one of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.

NOW the GOD of PEACE that brought again from the dead our LORD JESUS, that great SHEPHERD of the SHEEP, thro' the Blood of the everlasting COVENANT, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his Sight, thro' JESUS CHRIST, to whom be GLORY for ever and ever, AMEN.

F I N I S.



ERRATA.

PAGE 13. line 5. for *the* read *her*. P. 16. l. 11. for *that is in r. of*. P. 17. l. 16. blot out *the Infliction of*. P. 18. l. 17. blot out *had*. P. 32. l. 20. for *to r. towards*. P. 35. l. 1. to *all*, add *these of Grace*. p. 42. l. 17. for *compel r. oblige*.

